

# PRESS RELEASE

## Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

Fourteenth District, Michigan  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus

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### **CONYERS DECLARES NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO PASS TAUZIN-DINGELL**

#### **Releases Letter Signed by 100 Telecom CEO's Opposing Bill**

Today, Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee joined members of the Judiciary and Commerce Committees in releasing a letter signed by over 100 CEO's to Speaker Hastert opposing the Tauzin-Dingell bill.

Congressman Conyers issued the following statement in regards to the legislation:

“In the midst of a national crisis, war, and the onset of a recession, now is not the time to stomp out competition in local telephone markets by bringing the Tauzin-Dingell bill up for a vote.

Rumors from the Speaker's office continue to circulate that the House leadership plans to push this bill to a vote on the House floor before adjournment. Such a move is unnecessary and poses significant risk to our national economy.

That is why over 100 Telecom CEOs are releasing a letter today opposing the Tauzin-Dingell bill. This bill threatens to send our nation further into recession at this time of economic vulnerability.

In the 1996 Telecommunications Act, Congress said the Bell monopolies must open the local market to competitors, yet over 90% of the local telephone market is still controlled by the Bell monopolies.

Since 1996, we have seen competition lower Internet Service Provider prices, while increasing Internet access speed. Long distance rates have fallen in areas where there is vigorous competition. But in local telephone markets, where there is no competition, prices are increasing and service is worsening.

The supporters of the Tauzin-Dingell want to reverse that policy of competition that has worked so well. They want to enable the Bell monopolies to leverage their monopoly power into the Broadband market.

Halting competition will put over 150 competitive local exchange companies that were created following the '96 Act out of business - adding over 77,000 people to the unemployment rolls. That is the last thing we need.

\_\_\_\_Bringing this bill to a vote before we adjourn is a risky, unnecessary, and untimely political move. I urge the leadership to first work with us to develop a broadband policy that provides for more competition, more innovation, and lower prices in this emerging broadband market.”

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